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The situation in the Middle East

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Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 9 August 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and in response to the barrage of claims and fabrications from Israel and its systematic efforts to distort reality, the latest of which were the identical letters dated 20 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2017/526), I should like to inform you of the following:

- It is worth noting that, as in his earlier letters, the Permanent Representative of Israel completely ignores his country's obligations under Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). Indeed, he gives himself licence to determine how Lebanon should implement that resolution and how the Lebanese Army should interact with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).
- The claims that the Permanent Representative of Israel made in his letter provide the clearest evidence of his country's spying activities. We have warned repeatedly of those activities, because they flagrantly violate the sovereignty of Lebanon and blatantly contradict the obligations of Israel under resolution 1701 (2006).
- Green without Borders is a national association for the protection and development of forests, the environment and animal resources that is licensed by the Lebanese State pursuant to Notification No. 1127 and has several branches, one of which is in Labbunah. UNIFIL has confirmed that this association is involved in forestry activities. According to the Associate Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, Ms. Eri Kaneko, "over the last two years, UNIFIL has observed tree-planting activities undertaken by the non-governmental organization as is their stated objective. UNIFIL has not observed any unauthorized armed persons at the location or found any basis to report a violation of the resolution (1701 (2006) concerning the ceasefire)."
- These allegations are part of the efforts of Israel to divert international attention from its repeated violations of Lebanese sovereignty. Since the start

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of the current year, Israel has violated the sovereignty of Lebanon 648 times (209 times by sea, 98 times by land and 341 times by air). We have documented all of those violations in six letters of complaint that were addressed to you. In accordance with our request, all of the letters were issued as documents of the United Nations. Moreover, in successive reports, the Secretary-General has documented Israel's ongoing occupation of northern Ghajar and surrounding areas, in flagrant violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and the sovereignty of Lebanon, as well as Israel's occupation of the Shab'a Farms and the Kafr Shuba hills.

- It is well known that the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL coordinate their operations, and their cooperation has continued to grow since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006). They engage with one another through a strategic dialogue that is constantly and systematically being strengthened, with a view to mobilizing international support for building the capacity of the Lebanese Army and enabling it to fulfil its duties, maintain stability and tranquillity, and defend the sovereignty of Lebanon. The Lebanese Government trusts that you will continue to support UNIFIL in that regard.

We call upon the international community to reject the above-mentioned allegations and to condemn them, as well as Israeli threats against the Government and people of Lebanon, because they threaten to undermine the calm that Lebanon strives so hard to maintain along its southern border, and because they present a clear threat to security and peace in the region and, consequently, throughout the world.

I ask you to take the measures required to deter Israel from continuing to make grave threats against the security of my country and the safety of its people and its civil and official institutions, and from committing serious violations of my country's sovereignty, and to compel Israel to implement all the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.